THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO

REPORT TO THE CITY COUNCIL

DATE ISSUED: May 11, 2011 REPORT NO:

ATTENTION: Public Safety and Neighborhood Services Committee

SUBJECT: Engine Company Brownout and Lifeguard Reductions Monthly Report

REFERENCE: None

REQUESTED ACTION

This is an informational item only. No action is required by the Committee or the City Council.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Accept the Report.

INTRODUCTION

This is the thirteenth monthly report to the PS&NS Committee on the status of the Engine Company Brownouts and Lifeguard reductions being administered to achieve budgetary savings in the Fire-Rescue Department. Brownouts are defined as the temporary closures of up to eight fire engines per day in those fire stations housing more than one emergency response apparatus.

This month's report will update workload, brownout frequency, and response time statistics from May 1, 2010 through April 30, 2011. This data will be compared to the pre-brownout period of February 6, 2009 through February 5, 2010. This report will also provide information on Fire-Rescue's plan to implement the restoration of four brownout engines on July 1, 2011 and the remaining four brownout engines on January 1, 2012, as proposed in the Mayor's FY2012 Budget.

SUMMARY

During this reporting period (May 1, 2010 through April 30, 2011), the thirteen engines subject to brownout were out-of-service from 42% to 100% of the time. As a result, compliance with the 5 minute 90% of the time national response standard for the first due unit has declined to 25% to 80% within these districts and 53% city-wide as compared to 29% to 86% in these districts and 55% city-wide in the pre-brownout comparison period. Average response times increased by 4 to 33 seconds within the "brownout" districts and by 8 seconds city-wide when compared to 2009.

Response times for the assembly of an Effective Fire Force of 14-15 firefighters (3 engines, 1 truck and 1 battalion chief) within the 9 minutes 90% of the time national response standard was 29% to 100% within these districts and 80% city-wide as compared to 50% to 100% respectively and 84% city-wide for

the pre-brownout period. Average response times for an Effective Fire Force increased slightly (less than one minute) within these districts and city-wide when compared to the pre-brownout period.

STATISTICAL DATA

Following is cumulative statistical data for the emergency response districts subject to fire engine brownouts and the response time impacts city-wide for the period indicated.

Brownout Frequency

Data in the table below reflects the percentage of total operational hours in the reporting period (days in period x 24 hours) that the indicated engine company was out of service due to placement in brownout status.

Percent of Time Units Browned Out
5/1/2010 to 4/30/2011

Community	Engine	Pct.
College	E10	99.28%
Downtown	E201	48.38%
East Village	E4	44.99%
Golden Hills	E11	49.48%
Kearny Mesa	E28	41.94%
Lincoln Park	E12	40.78%
Midway	E20	52.38%
Mira Mesa	E44	98.88%
North Park	E14	51.55%
Pacific Beach	E21	56.54%
Rancho Penasquitos	E40	99.42%
San Ysidro	E29	47.94%
University City	E35	43.75%

Number of Emergency Responses

Data in the table below reflects the total number and type of emergency incidents that occurred within the City during the reporting period.

Overall System Wide

	Fire	Medical	Other	Total
2/6/09-2/5/10	3,675	96,451	13,264	113,390
5/1/10 -4/30/11	3,574	101,825	12,782	118,181
Percent Change	-2.75	5.57	-3.63	4.23

City-wide Response Time Performance

This following data reflects City-wide response time performance expressed in two formats. The first table shows the percentage of incidents where no more than 5 minutes elapsed from the time an engine or truck company was notified of an emergency response and their arrival at the scene of the emergency. The nationally accepted standard is 90% and the Department's current performance target is 55%. The second table uses the same notification and arrival time stamps, but reports response times as an average (mean).

5/1/2010 to 4/30/ 2011

5 Minutes or Less Response Time Percentage (1st Arriving Engine or Truck)	2009-2010 Pct	2010-2011 Pct	Percent Change
	55.47%	52.73%	-4.94

Average Response Time (1st Arriving Engine or Truck)	2009-2010 Avg	2010-2011 Avg	Percent Change
	0:05:03	0:05:11	2.87

Data Reported by Brownout Community

The data in the following tables uses the same criteria as described above, but breaks the data down by individual community.

Browned Out Districts
Incident Counts
5/1/10 -4/30/11

	2009-2010			2010-2011			Percent Change		
	Fire	Medical	Other	Fire	Medical	Other	Fire	Medical	Other
College (Sta. 10)	82	2500	290	79	2,773	299	-3.66	10.92	3.10
Downtown (Sta. 201)	52	2170	386	57	2,302	367	9.62	6.08	-4.92
East Village (Sta. 4)	72	4025	508	96	4,403	436	33.33	9.39	-14.17
Golden Hills (Sta. 11)	98	2090	216	95	2,123	171	-3.06	1.58	-20.83
Kearny Mesa (Sta. 28)	120	2444	634	134	2,644	671	11.67	8.18	5.84
Lincoln Park (Sta. 12)	206	4567	392	162	4,649	331	-21.36	1.80	-15.56
Midway (Sta. 20)	78	3073	410	83	3,427	381	6.41	11.52	-7.07
Mira Mesa (Sta. 44)	77	1587	299	64	1,526	264	-16.88	-3.84	-11.71
North Park (Sta. 14)	137	2918	295	115	3,027	255	-16.06	3.74	-13.56
Pacific Beach (Sta. 21)	97	3127	406	93	3,213	403	-4.12	2.75	-0.74
Rancho Penasquitos (Sta. 40)	50	1256	183	51	1,343	186	2.00	6.93	1.64
San Ysidro (Sta. 29)	63	3335	179	71	3,811	124	12.70	14.27	-30.73
University City (Sta. 35)	168	3010	915	146	3,234	891	-13.10	7.44	-2.62

5/1/2010 to 4/30/ 2011

5 Minutes or Less Response Time Percentage (First Arriving Engine or Truck)	2009-2010 Pct	2010-2011 Pct	Pct Change
College (Sta. 10)	53.51%	45.66%	-14.67
Downtown (Sta. 201)	80.82%	79.82%	-1.24
East Village (Sta. 4)	86.48%	78.27%	-9.50
Golden Hills (Sta. 11)	73.76%	66.00%	-10.53
Kearny Mesa (Sta. 28)	39.63%	35.05%	-11.57
Lincoln Park (Sta. 12)	49.38%	42.93%	-13.07
Midway (Sta. 20)	52.03%	51.32%	-1.37
Mira Mesa (Sta. 44)	40.09%	32.26%	-19.53
North Park (Sta. 14)	75.72%	67.46%	-10.91
Pacific Beach (Sta. 21)	59.70%	48.06%	-19.50
Rancho Penasquitos (Sta. 40)	28.82%	24.63%	-14.52
San Ysidro (Sta. 29)	60.29%	56.58%	-6.16
University City (Sta. 35)	34.81%	28.02%	-19.50

Average Response Time (First Arriving Engine or Truck)	2009-2010 Avg	2010-2011 Avg	Pct Change
College (Sta. 10)	0:05:03	0:05:19	5.55
Downtown (Sta. 201)	0:03:48	0:03:52	1.72
East Village (Sta. 4)	0:03:47	0:04:08	9.06
Golden Hills (Sta. 11)	0:04:15	0:04:37	8.81
Kearny Mesa (Sta. 28)	0:05:42	0:05:57	4.42
Lincoln Park (Sta. 12)	0:05:12	0:05:28	5.24
Midway (Sta. 20)	0:05:10	0:05:16	1.97
Mira Mesa (Sta. 44)	0:05:51	0:06:09	5.03
North Park (Sta. 14)	0:04:07	0:04:32	10.15
Pacific Beach (Sta. 21)	0:04:42	0:05:15	11.75
Rancho Penasquitos (Sta. 40)	0:06:11	0:06:43	8.64
San Ysidro (Sta. 29)	0:04:58	0:05:07	3.01
University City (Sta. 35)	0:06:10	0:06:40	8.20

Effective Fire Force

This following data reflects response time performance for the assembly of the 14-15 firefighters needed to complete the tasks necessary to combat a typical residential structure fire. In our City, this is achieved by the response of 3 engines, 1 truck, and 1 battalion chief. The table shows both City-wide and

brownout district performance. The nationally accepted standard is 90% and the Department's current performance target is 72%.

Effective Fire Force*

5/1/10 -4/30/11

		2009-2010	2009-2010	2009-2010	2010-2011	2010-2011	2010-2011
Community	**Engine**	**Percent 9 Min**	**Average (Minutes)**	**Count**	**Percent 9 Min**	**Average (Minutes)**	**Count**
College	10	94.74%	5.90	19	95.24%	6.39	21
Downtown	201	80.00%	6.66	20	100.00%	4.47	13
East Village	04	100.00%	4.70	34	90.91%	5.79	33
Golden Hills	11	100.00%	5.26	23	91.67%	6.39	24
Kearny Mesa	28	88.89%	6.98	9	71.88%	8.17	32
Lincoln Park	12	97.30%	6.04	37	93.75%	6.32	32
Midway	20	84.62%	7.30	13	100.00%	6.86	12
Mira Mesa	44	100.00%	6.46	8	64.29%	8.94	14
North Park	14	100.00%	5.57	35	100.00%	5.47	21
Pacific Beach	21	85.71%	7.72	21	84.62%	8.52	13
RanchoPenasquitos	40	50.00%	8.96	6	28.57%	10.27	7
San Ysidro	29	66.67%	8.36	6	87.50%	8.33	8
University City	35	70.59%	8.65	34	68.29%	8.83	41
City Wide		83.83%	6.98	711	79.92%	7.35	717

* 42 incidents originally dispatched as single engine responses and later upgraded were not included in this EFF calculation

SERVICE DELIVERY IMPACTS

There is ample scientific data to support that the more quickly the right type and number of resources can be brought to bear on an emergency incident, generally speaking, the better the outcome. Under the best of circumstances, multiple concurrent calls for service, routine maintenance, training, community educational outreach events, administrative activities, and unit location at the time of an incident dispatch can all impact incident response times.

Because many variables can influence incident outcomes, it is very difficult to isolate changes in incident outcomes resulting solely from brownouts. However, it can be safely assumed that any emergency receiving a delayed response for any reason will result in undesired impacts. In the case of fires, the most likely impact is increased fire spread and damage and the increased possibility of injury or death. In the case of a medical emergency, the impact may be prolonged pain from an injury, distress from a medical condition, or greater risk of permanent injury or death.

Service delivery impacts are felt by all requestors for emergency response whenever a response is delayed due to brownouts or other reasons. However, accurately isolating the specific impacts of the brownouts on victim survival probability proves to be extremely difficult and it is important to note that over the past five years, an average of four persons per year have died as a result of fires in our City.

The Department has recently converted from a paper-based inspection documentation program to a computer-based automated Field Collection Unit (FCU) program. Due to the change in methods for collection of inspection data and the "cross-over" between the two systems, reliable data is not yet available to report on current overdue status. It is felt by staff that the overdue inspections may be reduced significantly when the inspection status report is verifiable. The FCU program will transmit automatically the status of any inspection that is in the system. Previously, the system had to be updated manually.

To address the challenges in freeing units from emergency response status to conduct required training, the number of units permitted to be temporarily out-of-service at one time was increased from 12 to 14. In addition, the number of units removed from service to attend manipulative training sessions for 4 hours in the morning and afternoon at the Regional Public Safety Training Institute has been reduced from 5 (or 4) to 3 (or 2) units. When possible, these training sessions have been reduced by sending an instructor to the fire station or delivering the training in an online format to increase unit availability.

Significant Emergency Response Impacts

There were no significant emergency response impacts during this reporting period; however, a fire death did occur on April 27, 2011 at 2025 Diamond Street, in the community of Pacific Beach, and is discussed here due to media coverage and to illustrate how the potential impacts of a brownout can hinge on a small number of factors.

At 1:53 pm, a fire was reported in a bedroom of a ground floor apartment, with neighbors already using garden hoses to try and control the fire when the fire department was notified. Engine 21 was browned out on this day. Truck 21 was the first unit to arrive in 6 minutes and 17 seconds (goal is 5 minutes), but had no extinguishment capability since their Quint Truck was in the shop for maintenance. As a result, Engine 9 was the first unit to arrive with extinguishment capability, in 7 minutes and 44 seconds. An effective fire force was assembled in 7 minutes and 49 seconds (goal of 9 minutes). Unfortunately, a disabled male occupant succumbed to the fire in his apartment. The cause of the fire was determined to be flammables igniting while the victim was lighting a cigarette, during the use of therapeutic oxygen.

While a review of this incident indicates that a more rapid delivery of an apparatus with fire extinguishment capability could have reduced property damage, the location of the victim, circumstances of the fire, and the timeline indicate that his life was likely lost at about the time the fire was being reported. However, this incident does illustrate how just a few circumstances such as location of the fire, location of potential victims, fire cause, resource availability, and speed of response can significantly influence the impacts of brownouts on potential incident outcomes.

Proposed Brownout Restorations

The Mayor's FY2012 Budget proposal includes $8.7 million for the phased restoration of all eight brownouts in FY2012. Four would be restored July 1, 2011 and the remaining four would be restored on January 1, 2012. If this proposal is adopted by the City Council, Fire-Rescue has considered a number of possible restoral options and has decided upon the following plan.

- July 1, 2011
  - Engines subject to brownout would be reduced from 8 to 4
  - The rolling brownout schedule used for the past 15 months would be modified

        - Engine 40 (Rancho Penasquitos) would be removed from the rotation
        - Engine 10 (College) and Engine 44 (Mira Mesa) would move being browned-out monthly to being brown-out every third month
        - When Engine 44 is browned-out, they will displace the crew of Engine 38
        - Remaining 10 engines in the rotation would move from being browned-out every other month to every third month.
- January 1, 2012
    - Remaining 4 engines subject to brownout would be restored

This restoral plan was selected on the basis of the following considerations:

- Offers the most predictability since it is a rotation we have administered for the past 15 months (we are familiar with its impacts and operational challenges).
- Distributes the impacts across the City.
- Eliminates some units being scheduled for brownouts more frequently than others.
- Decreases the brownout interval for all participating stations.
- Restores an engine to Rancho Penasquitos, which had suffered the lowest 5 min. response time compliance throughout the past 15 months.
- Reunites the HazMat crews at Fire Station 44 (Mira Mesa) for 2 out of every 3 months, facilitating HazMat operations, training and maintenance activities.
- Reunites our training crews at Fire Station 10 (College) facilitating their training activities.

LIFEGUARD DIVISION

The Lifeguard Division contributed to budgetary savings via a number of reductions. Impacts from reductions taken have been felt in several areas of lifeguard operations: lifeguard coverage, training activities, increased workloads for supervisors, personnel schedules and Reductions in Force (RIF). These impacts are discussed below.

Budget Reduction Impacts on Lifeguard Training

Prior to the mid-year budget reductions implemented in January 2010, all permanent Lifeguards, other than those assigned to the night crew, were scheduled to be on-duty on Wednesdays. With the Lifeguard Division split into two shifts, on Wednesdays, one shift would be assigned to training while the other would be assigned to operations. Thus, the two shifts would rotate between operations and training allowing for ten hours of training on alternate Wednesdays during the six months of the year when beach attendance was at its lowest levels.

To achieve budgetary savings for Fiscal Years 2010-2011, dedicated training on Wednesdays was eliminated and employee schedules were altered to create additional relief shifts. These relief shifts allow the Lifeguard Division to cover open operational shifts on straight time rather than with overtime. Additionally, the River Rescue Team had its annual training reduced by half. Both of these changes

resulted in a reduction in the overtime budget. The Lifeguard Division also eliminated one Lifeguard II position dedicated to developing, organizing, and conducting training. Budgetary savings achieved by these reductions are $236,000 in overtime and $68,912 for the LGII FTE.

These budget impacts have reduced training opportunities. Refresher training for essential skills is being provided, albeit in a manner that is overall less effective than in years past. Additionally, other training important to ensure long term effectiveness and succession planning of Lifeguard Services is difficult to

achieve. A modified training plan was developed and implemented beginning October 2, 2010. This plan will continue to be evaluated and revised.

Blacks Beach
The implementation of the contract with the University of California San Diego (UCSD) for coverage at Blacks Beach has already resulted in significant improvements in life safety at that location

FISCAL CONSIDERATIONS
The brownouts are projected to achieve an FY2011 budgetary savings of $11.5M.

The Lifeguard Division reductions to overtime, Blacks Beach (Torrey Pines) operations, Wind 'n' Sea operations and operational relief hours are projected to achieve an FY2011 budgetary savings of $721,915.

PREVIOUS COUNCIL and/or COMMITTEE ACTIONS
N/A

COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION AND PUBLIC OUTREACH EFFORTS
Ongoing

KEY STAKEHOLDERS AND PROJECTED IMPACTS
Community and Citizens

Javier Mainar, Fire Chief